

out the older cars with newer, safer models. But more needs to be done. Metro needs to demonstrate safety improvements it has been making and ensure that it will continue to make safety its top priority if it expects continued financial support.

More broadly, this accident has highlighted that the safety of our public transportation systems should be a priority nationwide. We have been working in the Senate developing a legislative approach to ensuring proper safety standards are in place. Incredibly, FTA currently has no authority to regulate our Nation's transit agencies or develop national safety standards. A new draft bill developed by Senators DODD, SHELBY, and MENENDEZ will give FTA the tools to develop a national transit safety plan while also providing states the resources and flexibility to develop more robust transit safety oversight. The Banking Committee, of which I am a member, will soon consider this legislation and I am pleased that we are moving towards making progress in this area so that preventable tragedies, such as the one that occurred a year ago, will be a thing of the past.

#### HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

SPECIALIST CHRISTOPHER W. OPAT

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I would like to pay tribute to SPC Christopher W. Opat, an Iowan who gave his life in service to his country as part of Operation Iraqi Freedom. He was from Lime Springs, IA, and graduated from Crestwood High School in 1999. Christopher attended Iowa Lakes Community College before enlisting in the Army. He was remembered as a hard worker with a good sense of humor. Specialist Opat was serving his third deployment to Iraq. During his brief military career, he was twice awarded the Army Good Conduct Medal and also received the National Defense Service Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, the Army Service Ribbon, and the Overseas Service Ribbon. Our Nation is indebted to individuals like Specialist Opat whose tremendous sacrifice in defense of freedom must never be forgotten. The loss of such a dedicated, patriotic American is extremely sad and my prayers will be with Christopher's mother Mary Katherine, his father Leslie, and all his family and friends at this difficult time. I ask all my colleagues in the Senate to join me today in paying tribute to the courageous and selfless service of SPC Christopher Opat.

#### NOMINATION OF S. LESLIE IRELAND

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise today to urge the confirmation of Ms. Leslie Ireland, the President's nominee to be the Assistant Secretary of the Treasury for Intelligence and Analysis.

This is an individual who is well qualified, nominated to an important

national security position, and whose nomination has sparked no opposition or controversy to the best of my knowledge. Nonetheless, for more than 3 weeks her nomination has languished on the Senate calendar as Ms. Ireland has waited to be confirmed.

Let me speak briefly about Ms. Ireland and the position to which she has been nominated.

Leslie Ireland is a 25-year veteran of the Central Intelligence Agency. She has substantial experience in just about all aspects of the intelligence profession. Following a successful career at the CIA, her two most recent positions were that of Iran mission manager in the Office of the Director of National Intelligence and as one of the President's daily intelligence briefers.

In both capacities, she has worked extensively with all parts of the intelligence community. As the President's briefer, Ms. Ireland has been familiar not only with the breadth of intelligence analysis the community produces, but also the policy context in which intelligence is used.

She worked directly for the Nation's premier intelligence consumer—the President. His evaluation of her professionalism and capability is reflected in the fact that he nominated her for this Senate-confirmed position.

As Iran mission manager, Leslie Ireland was given the responsibility over intelligence collection and analysis of what is perhaps our Nation's most challenging intelligence target. She oversaw, prioritized, and directed efforts to understand the Iranian government, nuclear program, military, and society. This is a position with deep management and analytic challenges.

Through Ms. Ireland's work as Iran mission manager, she was already well known to the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence before she was nominated to be an Assistant Secretary of Treasury. She had appeared at numerous hearings and far more briefings, both for committee members and the staff.

Under the leadership of both of our past chairmen, Senators ROBERTS and ROCKEFELLER, the committee had an Iran study group to follow, oversee, and authorize intelligence activities with respect to Iran. The staff met often with Ms. Ireland, and I believe it was a productive relationship on both sides.

So it was no surprise that when Ms. Ireland was nominated on April 12, the committee moved quickly to consider the nomination. She was voted out of the committee on May 25 with the committee's unanimous support. She is ready to assume her new duties, and it is well past time for the Senate to act.

For the benefit of my colleagues, let me say a few words about the Assistant Secretary's position. It is a fairly new one, having been created in December 2003 in that year's Intelligence Authorization Act.

The Office of Intelligence and Analysis at Treasury has one foot within

the Department of the Treasury, assisting the Secretary and other senior departmental officials to set policies on sanctions and declarations.

A notable recent example is the effort by the Treasury Department to push, successfully, for the strongest international sanctions to date against Iran in United Nations Security Council Resolution No. 1929. Sanctions and international efforts such as this require careful analysis and are the product of intelligence designed to shine a light on the financial and other illicit activities of bad actors, including in this case the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps.

At the same time, the Office of Intelligence and Analysis has its other foot inside the intelligence community. Its personnel focus and help prioritize the financial intelligence collection efforts of those agencies that collect human, signals, and geospatial intelligence that analysts need.

The Treasury office also provides expertise on financial and economic matters that are necessary for broader intelligence community issues. For example, a recent issue of great interest is the financing of terrorist groups like al-Qaida and the militant and extremist groups with which they operate, like the Taliban, the Haqqani Network, and the Pakistani Taliban, the TTP. The Office of Intelligence and Analysis helps inform the intelligence community on this topic.

It is critical to understand the financial activities of these groups both to understand how they operate and to provide keys to disrupting them.

In Afghanistan, our troops face a well-funded Taliban enemy that relies on illicit funding for its lifeblood—and for the ammunition and improvised explosive devices that put our troops' lives at risk.

In the tribal areas of Pakistan, al-Qaida affiliated terrorist groups may be seeking to fund attacks on our homeland such as the unsuccessful car bomb attempt in Times Square. Among the most important impacts of the recent death of the third highest ranking al-Qaida figure, Shaykh Sa'id Al-Masri, is the anticipated loss to the organization's fundraising.

As North Korea continues its erratic violent behavior and considers a transition of power from Kim Jong Il to his son Kim Jong Eun, its economy has been further wrecked by a disastrous devaluation of the currency.

These are the issues that confront the Assistant Secretary of Treasury for Intelligence and Analysis. It is a position that has been vacant since September 2009. There is no excuse for that vacancy to continue another week. The Senate has before it a nominee who is well qualified to fill this role. She has the full support of the Intelligence Committee, and there has been no controversy or opposition to her throughout the confirmation process.

I urge the Senate to confirm Leslie Ireland.